

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-07 SAJ-01 OMB-01 /085 W

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P R 081631Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8459

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION NATO

USMISSIN USUN

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 14152

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, UR

SUBJ: AUTHORITATIVE PRAVDA ARTICLE ON LEBANON CALLS FOR "REASONABLE COMPROMISE"

REF: MOSCOW 12914, MOSCOW A-247 (BOTH NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. LENGTHY, AUTHORITATIVE "OBSERVER" ARTICLE ON LEBANESE SITUATION IN SEPTEMBER 8 PRAVDA PROVIDES UP-TO-DATE SOVIET VIEW OF WAY OUT OF LEBANESE "BLIND ALLEY". PRAVDA DESCRIBES IN RELATIVELY OBJECTIVE MANNER BACKGROUND
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OF LEBANESE EVENTS AND CURRENT INTERNAL POLITICAL MANEUVER-

ING, CRITICIZES SYRIAN INTERVENTION, CALLS FOR A SOLUTION BASED ON "REASONABLE COMPROMISE" AND WARNS OF DANGER OF PUSHING PALESTINIANS AND NATIONAL-PATRIOTIC FORCES TOO FAR. EMBASSY ASSESSMENT IS THAT ARTICLE REPRESENTS SERIOUS SOVIET ATTEMPT TO PLACE REASONED VIEWS ON RECORD AT TIME WHEN BEHIND-SCENES POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN LEBANON MAY PRESAGE NEW AND DRAMATIC SECOND ACT ON THE GROUND. END SUMMARY.

2. ASSUME DEPARTMENT HAS FBIS TEXT. EMBASSY WOULD DRAW ATTENTION TO FOLLOWING SALIENT POINTS:

-- MODERATE, REASONED TONE OF ARTICLE. THIS, EMBASSY BELIEVES, IS MOSCOW SPEAKING FOR THE RECORD AND EXPECTING ITS VIEWS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT (ALTHOUGH ADMITTING BY OMISSION THAT IT IS NOT IN A POSITION TO ENSURE SUCCESS OF EFFORT).

-- TIMING. AFTER PALESTINIAN SETBACKS, SYMBOLIZED BY FALL OF TAL ZAATAR, AMID REPORTS - EVEN IN SOVIET PRESS-OF ONGOING POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS IN LEBANON, ON THE EVE OF PRESIDENT-ELECT SARKIS' ACCESSION TO OFFICE--TIMING IS NOW RIGHT FOR MOSCOW TO OFFER A MORE DEFINITIVE VIEW OF ITS CURRENT ASSESSMENT OF LEBANESE SITUATION.

-- CRITICISM OF SYRIANS. AFTER TAKING HARD, BUT STANDARD SWIPE AT ISRAELIS, CRITICIZING AMERICANS AND SAUDIS, "OBSERVER" TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO SYRIANS. COOPERATION BETWEEN SYRIANS AND PLO WAS DESTROYED, HE STATES, ADDING CATEGORICALLY THAT "NO MATTER BY WHAT CONSIDERATIONS DAMASCUS WAS GUIDED IN INTRODUCING ITS TROOPS INTO LEBANON, ITS DECISION WORKED AGAINST THE PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT, ALLOWED THE RIGHTISTS TO DELIVER PERCEPTIBLE BLOWS TO DETACHMENTS OF PALESTINIANS AND LEBANESE NATIONAL-PATRIOTIC FORCES." "OBSERVER" CITES "DEMANDS" BY VARIOUS FACTIONS " AND NOT ONLY IN ARAB WORLD" FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON, BUT ALSO NOTES THAT "PARTIAL" WITHDRAWAL IS AMONG IDEAS MOST RECENTLY FLOATED IN AREA.

-- CALL FOR POLITICAL SOLUTION OF SITUATION "ON BASIS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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REASONABLE COMPROMISE" -- THE "ONLY METHOD" OF RESTORING PEACEFUL LIFE, SAYS "OBSERVER", WHO GOES ON TO WARN THAT "SETTLEMENT CAN NOT BE ALLOWED TO TAKE PLACE AT EXPENSE OF FRUSTRATION OF RIGHTS OF PALESTINIANS OR WITHOUT ACCOUNTING FOR LEGITIMATE DEMANDS OF LEBANESE NATIONAL-PATRIOTIC FORCES." SUCH MANEUVERS--ALREADY TAKING PLACE---CAN LEAD ONLY TO FURTHER BLOODSHED AS WELL AS ATTEMPTS TO AUTOMATICALLY REJECT PEACEFUL PROPOSALS--AS "SOME ULTRA-LEFT ELEMENTS"

IN PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT AND IN "FRONT OF PATRIOTIC FORCES"
ARE DOING.

3. IN EMBASSY'S OPINION LAST TWO POINTS MAKE UP MOST IMPORTANT
PART OF MESSAGE MOSCOW IS TRYING TO SEND. BY CALLING FOR
A "REASONABLE COMPROMISE" AS "ONLY" WAY OUT, MOSCOW ADMITS
NOT ONLY ITS ACCEPTANCE OF WORSENERD MILITARY AND POLITICAL
SITUATION OF PALESTINIANS, BUT ALSO ITS INABILITY TO DO
ANYTHING TO ENABLE THE PALESTINIANS TO IMPROVE THEIR
POSITION. INDEED, IN THIS LENGTHY, SOBER PIECE,
MOSCOW DOES NOT EVEN INDICATE THAT IT WOULD BE WILLING
OR ABLE TO PLAY ANY SORT OF INTERNATIONAL ROLE ITSELF
IN RESOLVING THE LEBANESE CRISIS. THE MOST IT CAN DO,
IT SEEMS, IS TO WARN THAT FURTHER PRESSURE ON THE
PALESTINAINS WILL INCREASE THE INFLUENCE OF THE EX-
TREMISTS-- " THE ULTRA-LEFT". THIS SURPRISINGLY CON-
SERVATIVE POINT OF VIEW WAS RECENTLY PUT FORTH PRIVATELY
TO ACTING POL COUNSELOR AND EMBOFF BY IMEMO OFFICIALS,
DEPUTY DIRECTOR PRIMAKOV AND ME EXPERT MIRSKIY (MOSCOW
A-247).

4. EMBASSY NOTES THAT AFTER FALL OF TAL ZAATAR MOSCOW
HAD PICKED UP REMARKS BY LEBANESE CP SECRETARY GENERAL
SHAWI THAT TIME HAD COME FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT BASED
ON A "SOUND COMPROMISE" (MOSCOW 12914). ALL THAT HAS
HAPPENED IN INTERVENING THREE WEEKS IS THAT MOSCOW HAS
APPARENTLY ADOPTED SHAWI'S PESSIMISTIC ASSESSMENT AS ITS
OWN.
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